



Community Gardener's Companion

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DULUTH COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

HARVEST ISSUE

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Winding Down the Season

by Sue Katt

Here are some things you can do to get the most out of your late-season garden. First and foremost, keep an eye on the nighttime temperatures. Warm weather crops should be harvested or protected when they start calling for frost. Crops to watch include:

- **Basil** leaves will start to deteriorate even before the frost. Harvest your basil when the nights start getting cold for best quality.
- **Tomato** fruits and plants will be damaged by frost. When they call for frost, you can either harvest your tomatoes or cover them. Commonly, we get a series of cold nights (that may or may not actually include frost) and then several weeks of warm nights again before the weather really turns. You can get several more weeks of growing season this way, but if it gets really cold, tomatoes will become damaged even if they are covered. It's not a bad idea to hedge your bets by harvesting some tomatoes and leaving some in the garden covered. Any tomato that is fully mature but still green can be harvested and ripened indoors, out of direct sunlight.
- **Squashes and pumpkins** will also be harmed by frost. You should be especially careful with them if you plan to store them – even a slight damage to the skin will shorten their storage life. If they aren't ripe, cover them. You can tell when they are ripe when the stems start to dry up, and frequently they change color.

include beans, peppers, eggplant, and summer squash. Your best bet with these is to just harvest everything when they call for frost. Harvest your onions, too.

Cool weather crops can stay in the ground well into the fall. Some of them, like Brussels sprouts, even improve with cold weather. Anything in the cabbage/broccoli family will survive a few frosts. Kale can be left in even longer, and can sometimes be harvested after it snows.

Carrots, and to a lesser extent beets, will be fine with frost and cold weather for a while. Don't leave them in the ground after it freezes, unless you want to try mulching your carrots for winter harvest. To do this, mulch them heavily with several feet of leaves or straw. To facilitate winter harvesting, you can put a board or some bagged leaves over the top to allow



The MISSION of the Duluth Community Garden Program is to strengthen our community and foster self-sufficiency among the people of the Duluth area by providing education, tools, facilities for food production and preservation, and promoting sustainable gardening practices

Some other plants that won't survive frost

(Continued on page 2)

The Harvest Moon

The flame-red moon, the
harvest moon,
Rolls along the hills,
gently bouncing,
A vast balloon,
Till it takes off, and sinks upward
To lie on the bottom of the sky,
like a gold doubloon.
The harvest moon has come,
Booming softly through heaven,
like a bassoon.
And the earth replies all night,
like a deep drum.
So people can't sleep,
So they go out where elms and
oak trees keep
A kneeling vigil, in a religious hush.
The harvest moon has come!
And all the moonlit cows and
all the sheep
Stare up at her petrified, while
she swells
Filling heaven, as if red hot,
and sailing
Closer and closer like the
end of the world.
Till the gold fields of stiff wheat
Cry 'We are ripe, reap us!'
and the rivers
Sweat from the melting hills.

- Ted Hughes

Winding Down the Season

(Continued from page 1)

easier access. Carrots stored this way keep very well, with very good flavor.

To keep pests and diseases in check, pull out dead plants and put them in the compost pile (diseased plants should not be composted but thrown away). Prepare a bed or two—clean them out and dig them up—so that you're ready to plant early peas and spinach in the spring.

Finally, take a minute to assess your garden and jot down some notes be-

fore winter sets in. What did well? What didn't? What got planted too late and never matured? What did you have too much of? What did you wish you had planted more of? These notes will be even more helpful if you've kept track of planting dates as you went along, but either way you'll appreciate having these notes in the spring when it's time to plan your garden.



by Annie Kregness

Cannery Notes

If you're wondering how to preserve the volume of vegetables from your garden, give us a call!

We loan food preservation equipment like hot water bath canners, Victorio Strainers, dehydrators, stock pots and a Mehu-Maya juicer. We have lots of canning jars available—particularly quarts, but some pints as well. And we're always happy to accept jar donations: standard canning jars only, please, no re-used mayonnaise jars.

Give a call for recipes and advice. Wednesdays are the best day to reach me (Annie) in person, or leave a message and I'll get back to you.

Also, check out the Salsa and Pressure Canning classes scheduled this season (see p. 9 for more information).

In this issue I want to pass on some of the successful new recipes I tried last season. It's a hodge-podge of my new favorites!

Sweet-and-Sour Basil Tomatoes

- 1 pound tomatoes
- 2 to 3 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2 to 3 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 ½ to 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 to 3 tablespoons shredded fresh basil leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives

Slice the tomatoes as thick or thin as you like and arrange them on a serving platter. Sprinkle on the brown sugar, then the vinegar. Drizzle olive oil over the top. Sprinkle on the basil and chives. Set aside to marinate for 5 to 10 minutes, then serve.

Refrigerator Pickles

- 2 cups distilled white vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup kosher or pickling salt
- 10 to 12 medium cucumbers, scrubbed and sliced ⅛-inch thick (about 2 pounds)
- ½ medium green bell pepper, seeded and sliced into ⅛-inch-wide strips
- 1 large white onion, thinly sliced
- 2 to 4 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon Pickling Spices
- 2 tablespoons dill seed

Whisk together the vinegar, sugar, and salt in a medium bowl to dissolve the sugar. Set aside.

Layer the cucumbers, peppers, onion, garlic, spices and dill in a half-gallon jar or divide between 2 quart jars. Pour in the vinegar mixture. It will not cover the vegetables at first but will as they release liquid as they cure. Cap the jar tightly and put in the refrigerator for 1 week, turning the jar upside down and shaking a bit once a day to keep the ingredients mixed.

Serve after 1 week or continue to store in the refrigerator for up to 6 months.

From [Gardeners' Community Cookbook](#)

Green Tomato Relish

- 1 pound green tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1½ pounds onions, finely chopped
- 1½ pounds bell peppers, assorted colors if possible, finely chopped
- 1 large jalapeño, stemmed and finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons pickling salt
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup distilled white vinegar
- ¾ teaspoon turmeric
- 2 tablespoons Pickling Spices tied in cheesecloth

Place tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, jalapeño, and salt in a large bowl. Add water to cover and set aside to soak overnight at room temperature.

Next day, drain and rinse the vegetables. Set aside.

Combine the sugar, vinegar, turmeric, and bag of pickling spices in a large non-reactive pot and bring to a boil. Add the drained vegetables and return to a boil. Remove from the heat immediately and ladle into the jars.

Seal and process in a hot-water bath for 15 minutes, or store in refrigerator for up to 6 months.

From [Gardeners' Community Cookbook](#)



Fall Cover Crops

Would you like to try a cover crop this fall? Planting a cover crop this time of year, and then turning it back into the soil in the Spring, is like growing your compost in place.

Pick up a free ¼-pound bag of annual ryegrass at the garden office - just call ahead to arrange a pick-up time.

There are several cover crops you can use in your garden, but this time of year, annual ryegrass is an especially good one. As space in your garden opens up, or once you have cleared your garden for the fall, sow the seed at the rate of 1 pound per 1000 sq. ft.

Ryegrass will start growing this fall, die back during the winter, and then resume growth in the Spring. Make sure you turn it under well in the Spring or it may become a weed problem. It is a nice grass which protects the soil from erosion, helps to aerate, and adds nutrients once turned in.

Pesto Time!

The following recipes from The Gardeners' Community Cookbook are a pesto lover's dream come true. Try them all fresh—in general, pestos can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 5 days—or freeze them for longer storage. You can play with ingredient combinations. Some recipes recommend adding cheese before eating if pesto is to be frozen.

Winter Pesto

- 2 ½ cups (packed) coarsely chopped mixed fresh greens, such as spinach, watercress, kale, or parsley
- 3 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ½ cup grated hard white cheese
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup olive oil
- salt

Place the greens, garlic, and nuts in a food processor and chop as fine as possible. Add the cheese, lemon juice, and oil. Continue processing until well blended. Transfer to a bowl and stir in salt to taste.

Parsley-Pecan Pesto

- ½ cup pecan halves
- ¾ cup (packed) fresh parsley leaves
- ¾ cup (packed) fresh basil leaves
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 to 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¾ cup olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Place the pecans, parsley, basil, garlic, and lemon juice in a food processor and blend as fine as possible. Add the oil, salt, and pepper and continue processing until blended.

Cilantro Pesto

- 4 cups cilantro leaves and tender stems
- 1 jalapeno, stemmed and cut up
- 5 cloves garlic
- ½ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup olive oil

Place all ingredients except the oil in a food processor and blend until almost smooth. Slowly add the oil and continue processing until well mixed but not pureed.

Arugula Lover's Pesto

- 1 cup coarsely chopped arugula leaves
- ½ cup fresh parsley leaves
- ½ cup coarsely cut winter greens, such as mizuna or giant red mustard
- ½ cup walnut halves or pieces
- 2 to 4 cloves garlic, to taste
- 1 to 2 jalapenos, stemmed, seeded, and coarsely chopped, to taste
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup olive oil

Wash the greens all together in a large bowl of water. Drain and set aside to dry. Pulverize the walnuts in a food processor. Add the remaining ingredients, including the still-moist greens, and process until minced as fine as possible.

Classic Basil Pesto

- ½ cup pine nuts
- 4 to 6 cloves garlic, to taste
- 4 cups shredded fresh basil leaves
- 1 cup olive oil

1 cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese, preferably a mix

Place the pine nuts, garlic, basil, and oil in a food processor and blend as fine as possible. Transfer the mixture to a medium bowl and stir in the cheese. Add salt to taste.

Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto

- 1 cup (packed) dried tomatoes
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup olive oil

If using oil-packed tomatoes, drain them, reserving the oil for later. If the tomatoes are not packed in oil, soak them to soften in boiling water for about 20 minutes, then drain. Place the tomatoes and the rest of the ingredients in a food processor and process until well blended.



September 2005

Notes

Fall Garden Tasks

Plant Garlic

Cut out old raspberry canes

Remove older strawberry plants to make room for new ones

Plant cover crops (see p. 3)

Clean up garden

Protect sensitive plants with row cover or plastic on frosty nights

Average date of first frost
Airport: September 22
Harbor: October 20

Duluth Community
Garden Program
206 West Fourth St.
Duluth, MN 55806
218-722-4583

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
LABOR DAY					NEW MOON	GRAND-PARENTS' DAY
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		CLASS** BASICS OF SALSA PRESER- VATION			9AM-4PM** HARVEST FEST	2-4 PM** URBAN GARDEN TOUR
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			AUTUMN EQUINOX <i>Average date of first frost in higher elevations</i>	6 PM HARVEST POTLUCK (See p. 10)	FULL MOON	
26	27	28	29	30		
		CLASS** PRESSURE CANNING BASICS				

** Please see page 9 for more information about these events

Vegetable Salsa

The vegetables give this salsa a thick texture which makes it good on sandwiches and burgers. It can be canned or frozen.

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-2 cups chopped seeded hot peppers
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or 1 tablespoon dried
- 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro
- 6 cups fresh tomatoes, finely chopped or 4 cups tomato puree
- ½ cup wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Heat oil in large saucepan. Add onions, celery, carrots, garlic and peppers. Saute until soft, about 10 minutes. Add parsley, cilantro, tomatoes, vinegar, salt and sugar. Simmer for 45 minutes.

Apple Butter

- 8 pounds apples, rinsed and quartered
- 3 pounds brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground cloves
- ½ tablespoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Place the apples in a large, non-reactive pot. Add water barely to cover, bring to a boil, and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the apples are soft, about 1 hour. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool in the liquid.

When cool, drain the apples. Puree batches in a food mill to remove the skins, seeds, and cores. You should have 16 cups of puree.

Add the remaining ingredients, adjusting the amounts if you have noticeably more or less of the apple puree, and mix well.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread the apple mixture into a non-reactive baking pan about 18 by 12 by 3 inches. Place in the oven and bake, stirring once or twice, until thickened and no longer soupy, at least 3 hours.

Apple butter can be stored in the refrigerator for 6 months, or can be hot water bath processed (pints for 10 minutes). Let stand for at least 6 weeks before using.

Source: The Gardeners' Community Cookbook

COMMUNITY GARDENER'S LINKS



Appropriate Transfer of Technology to Rural Areas
www.ncat.org

Farmers Union
www.mfu.org

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
www.iatp.org

Land Stewardship Project
www.landstewardshipproject.org

Midwest Organic
www.midwestorganic.com

Midwest Organic & Sustainable Ed. Service
www.mosesorganic.org

Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
www.msawg.org

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
www.mda.state.mn.us

Minnesota Environmental Partnership
www.mepartnership.org

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture
www.misa.umn.edu

Minnesota Project
www.mnproject.org

National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture
www.sustainableagriculture.net

Natural Resource Conservation Service
www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov

New Farm
www.newfarm.org

Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society
www.npsas.org

Practical Farmers of Iowa
www.practicalfarmers.org

Pride of the Prairie
www.prideoftheprairie.org

Southeast Minnesota Food Network
www.localfoodnetwork.org

Superior Grown Foods
www.superiorgrown.org

Sustainable Farming Association of Central MN
www.sustainablefarmingcentralmn.com

Whole Farm Coop
www.wholefarmcoop.com

Windustry
www.windustry.com

Small Grains
www.smallgrains.org

Chemical-Free Lawn Care Basics

by Sue Katt

Theme In Yellow

I spot the hills
 With yellow balls in autumn.
 I light the prairie cornfields
 Orange and tawny gold clusters
 And I am called pumpkins.
 On the last of October
 When dusk is fallen
 Children join hands
 And circle round me
 Singing ghost songs
 And love to the harvest moon;
 I am a jack-o'-lantern
 With terrible teeth
 And the children know
 I am fooling.
 - Carl Sandburg

Fall is a good time to be preparing for a chemical-free, low-maintenance lawn next season. Here is a basic strategy.

- Don't mow too short – mow to 3 to 3½" – this is THE most important thing you can do for a healthy lawn
- Mow when lawn is about 4" tall so you are removing 1/3 of the leaf
- Keep mower blades sharp
- Only water if we haven't had rain in a week, and then do it in the morning and give it a good soaking
- Don't over-fertilize—have your soil tested and fertilize only if necessary
- Leave your grass clippings on the lawn to decompose

Control weeds by promoting healthy grass by following the above recommendations. If you have weeds, interrupt their cycle by digging up the roots or cutting off flowering stalks before they go to seed.

In addition, it is helpful to improve your soil by adding compost, especially if your soil is heavy clay or loose sand. Add ½" of compost, spread evenly and water thoroughly.

Soil compaction is a common problem with heavy clay soils, which many of us in the northland have. Aerate your lawn with a soil aerator 2-3 times per week at 2-3 week intervals starting in late July until early September. In September, top-dress with a thin layer of compost and overseed with a northern mix.

Overseeding is helpful if you have a weed problem or a thin lawn. Choose a mix of grasses that will grow well here: a mix of Kentucky bluegrass, perennial rye and red fescue or tall fescue. You may be able to find it pre-mixed, usually called something like "northern mixture." It's best to overseed in the fall. Use a spreader to distribute grass seed over area. Use about 4-6 pounds of seed per 1000 square feet. Keep grass seed

moist until it has germinated and grown to a height of 1". You may need to do it a few times. If you have a severe weed problem—if over 50% of your lawn is weeds—you may be better off tilling it up and reseeding with a better mixture. Many older lawns or lawns that have been grown from sod are primarily Kentucky bluegrass.

Some weeds may be indicators that you need to (a) plant something other than grass or (b) improve your soil.

- Plantain may indicate the soil is compacted or poorly-drained. Add compost.
- Creeping Charlie may indicate the site is too shady or the soil is poorly drained. Select shade tolerant grasses or other shade tolerant plants.
- Hawkweed may indicate the soil is low in nutrients. Do a soil test. Add compost and/or a slow release organic fertilizer.
- Dandelions may indicate grass is too thin. Dig out tap root. Overseed.
- Moss may indicate the site is too shady or wet. May need to plant something other than grass.

For more detailed information, there are handouts put out by The Green Thumb Project available from WLSSD, EAGLE and from the Duluth Community Garden Program – give us a call, we'd be happy to send them to you.

Other recommended resources:

[Breaking the Pesticide Habit: Alternatives to 12 Hazardous Pesticides](#) by Terry Gips

[Common-Sense Pest Control](#) by William Olkowski

[The Handbook of Successful Ecological Lawn Care](#) by Paul Sachs

[The Chemical-Free Lawn](#) by Warren Schultz

NOTICES

Food Preservation Classes

Classes from the Cannery at the Duluth Community Garden Program

Classes will be held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Damiano Soup Kitchen, 206 W. 4th St.. Cannery programs are free to Garden Program members and all other income-eligible persons and groups. Call 722-4583 with questions or to register.

Salsa - *Annie Kregness*

September 14

Learn the basics of great salsa preservation.

Overcoming your Fears of Pressure Canning - *Annie Kregness*

September 28

Learn the basics of safe and easy pressure canning.

Annual Urban Garden Tour

September 17

Join other gardeners on a tour of a few community garden sites as well as a few bountiful private gardens, including a home of urban chickens! No charge. 2 to 4 pm. Meet at 1938 Lawn St. (across from UMD's College St. entrance). Call the Garden Program office for more information. 722-2781

Harvest Festival 2005

September 10

The Harvest Festival showcases the agriculture of northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin, promoting local food production as a key component of a healthier economy and environment and healthier communities. A day-long, family oriented outdoor event, the Festival attracts thousands of visitors each year to feast on locally produced food and enjoy the farmer's market, crafters, educational demonstrations, livestock, 4-H and other exhibits, youth activities, live music and more! Sponsored by the Sustainable Farming Association. 9am to 4 pm, Bayfront Park. Free admission. www.harvestfest.cjb.net

SFA's Farmer's Market

The Farmer's Market at UMD at Kirby Plaza is open 2 – 4:30 every Wednesday until September 28th.

Tillers and Tools Available

The Duluth Community Garden Program makes tillers and other garden tools available for loan at no cost, although donations are welcome. Call the office at 722-4583 for information on general tools. The following tillers are available:

- A rear-tine BCS tiller, need truck or trailer to transport. Call Paul Steklenski at 728-6206.
 - A small, hand-held mantis tiller. Call Marian Syrjamaki-Kuchta at 724-4833.
-

Do you know of local events interesting to gardeners? Want to swap labor, supplies, tools, seeds or plants?

Call the Garden Program office at 722-4583 to place your item in the next newsletter.

Duluth Community Garden Program

plant•a•lot



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Block Grant

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Duluth-Superior Area
Community Foundation

Sheltering Arms Foundation

and other supporters

Damiano Center

3rd Street Bakery

Johnny's Selected Seeds

Duluth Community Garden Program's ANNUAL HARVEST POTLUCK



September 23rd

6 pm to 9 pm

Peace United Church of Christ

1015 E. 11th St., Duluth

It's time for the annual fall gathering of community gardeners. This time, it's a potluck social event. No door prizes, no jokes (well, maybe a few jokes), no stone soup, no fanfare—just good food and camaraderie with fellow gardeners.